

**EFFECTIVE**

At Bridges conversion.

**SUBJECTS**

1. Short Term Family Support (STFS).
2. Child Development and Care (CDC).

**1) STFS****BEM 218**

The policy is unchanged. This manual item is updated to clarify the process to issue STFS in Bridges as it is different from that in legacy systems.

Most importantly, **do NOT withdraw the cash assistance application because a valid application for cash is required for STFS eligibility.** An application for cash assistance in Bridges applies to all cash programs and is disposed of when STFS or any type of cash assistance is approved and authorized.

This manual item describes the automation of the STFS eligibility determination and issuance process which automatically records the disposition of the cash assistance application when complete. The STFS - Details screen replaces the first section of the DHS-1079. The STFS - Score screen replaces the second section of the DHS-1079. In addition, the forms associated with STFS are automatically generated and may be printed and mailed or centrally printed.

**DEPARTMENT  
PHILOSOPHY**

The Family Independence Program (FIP) provides temporary ongoing cash assistance to families to help

- Meet family needs.
- Strengthen family relationships.
- Promote self sufficiency.

ShortTerm Family Support (STFS) is Michigan's diversion from ongoing FIP for a target population of cash assistance applicants. Families who are normally self sufficient and facing temporary obstacles to continued self sufficiency may be better served by a one-time, lump sum payment, than ongoing cash assistance. An STFS payment may resolve barriers quickly and prevent families from becoming dependent on public assistance.

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**DEPARTMENT  
POLICY**

STFS is a lump sum payment issued to targeted cash assistance applicant families in exchange for their agreement to not receive FIP for four months. The amount of the payment is equal to three times the FIP payment standard for the STFS/FIP group size and can be received only one time in a twelve month period.

The **STFS Period** is four consecutive months beginning with the month of application. When FIP is approved for any portion of the STFS period a client error over issuance is created that is equal to the amount of the STFS issued.

Receipt of STFS is not an entitlement so the client has no right to a hearing when the case is processed for ongoing FIP instead of STFS. Bridges automatically calculates the score for STFS screening based on case data and responses entered to key questions. Bridges considers STFS for cash assistance applicants scoring at least six points on the Bridges STFS - Score Screen.

Make decisions about STFS eligibility on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with your FIM. Expedious processing of STFS applications supports the diversion philosophy and increases the family's chances of avoiding long term public assistance.

**ELIGIBILITY  
CRITERIA**

STFS groups must meet all FIP eligibility criteria except participation in JET activities. Families pending and approved for STFS are not referred to JET.

**Target Population  
(TP)**

The target population for STFS is families who meet all of the following:

- Are normally self sufficient.
- Expect to need assistance only for a short time.
- Are able to return to self sufficiency without JET services.
- Have not received FIP, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or TANF diversion payment (from any state) in the last twelve months.

## STFS Details

The STFS - Details screen in Bridges identifies families who are potential candidates for STFS. Complete this screen for all cash assistance applicants potentially eligible for FIP at the application interview. If the answer to any question on the STFS - Details screen is *yes*, the family has no potential for STFS. Bridges will proceed with FIP eligibility determination.

If all the answers are *no*, proceed to the STFS - Score screen. Enter the applicant's reply to pending questions. Explain the STFS option to families scoring 6 or more points on the STFS - Score screen. Enter *yes* or *no* to the question "Is client interested in STFS" and proceed to the next screen.

When *no* is entered or the family scores less than six, Bridges proceeds with FIP eligibility determination and no further STFS action is needed.

When *yes* is entered, Bridges produces the following:

- A DHS-1078, STFS Plan.
- A DHS-403, STFS Information and Repay Agreement.

Forms are centrally printed and sent to the client the night eligibility determination - benefit calculation (EDBC) is run.

## FORMS

### DHS-1078, STFS Plan

The DHS-1078, STFS Plan is the family's opportunity to explain why diversion is better for their family than ongoing FIP. Bridges populates the expected amount of the STFS payment and the STFS period on the DHS-1078. The family uses it to:

- Report adults' employment history.
- Describe the family's current financial situation.
- Explain their plan to meet financial obligations during the four-month STFS period and thereafter.

Request that the client complete and return the STFS plan along with other verifications needed to determine FIP eligibility as indicated on the verification check list (VCL).

Encourage STFS families to request determination of their eligibility for other department programs to increase their chances of regaining self-sufficiency. In addition, give them a copy of your local office community resource list.

### **DHS-403, STFS Information and Repay Agreement**

The DHS-403, Information and Repay Agreement, outlines the conditions of the STFS payment as well as the client's agreement to repay the entire STFS payment if FIP is authorized for any portion of the STFS period. Bridges populates the expected amount of the STFS and the STFS period on the DHS-403.

The DHS-403 must be completed, signed and returned before STFS can be authorized.

### **STFS DECISION**

To be eligible for an STFS payment, the family must be FIP eligible in the application month or the following month except for attendance at JET. Enter verification sources and received dates in data collection.

When the family returns STFS forms and expresses interest in STFS, review the STFS plan and consult your FIM to decide if ongoing FIP or an STFS payment better meets the family's needs. Document your decision and rationale for choosing to serve the family with STFS or ongoing FIP on the family's plan.

Enter *yes* or *no* to each question pertaining to the DHS-1078 on the STFS - Score screen. All must be *yes* for STFS to be issued. Run EDBC to confirm the family's STFS eligibility.

### **AUTHORIZING STFS PAYMENTS**

Run EDBC in Bridges and certify the STFS approval. Bridges issues the STFS payment in the form of a warrant based on FIP payment standards and the family size.

STFS eligibility is calculated by Bridges as part of the family's cash assistance application. Approval of STFS automatically disposes of the cash assistance application. **Do NOT withdraw the cash assistance application because a valid application for cash is required for STFS eligibility.**

**STFS STANDARD OF PROMPTNESS**

Because STFS will be registered as cash assistance, the usual 45-day standard of promptness applies to the registration. However, STFS can only be authorized before the end of the pay period in which the application becomes 30 days old to support the integrity of the STFS philosophy. If you are unable to authorize the STFS by this date, process for ongoing FIP.

**Note:** STFS candidates may be in a situation that can be easily remedied and result in less work for the specialist, and less hardship for the family, if the STFS determination and payment authorization can be processed expeditiously. Please consider this when prioritizing the processing of STFS and other cash assistance applications.

**CLIENT NOTICE**

Bridges generates a notice of case action notifying families of STFS approval. You must also send the client a copy of the signed DHS-403.

**EFFECT ON OTHER PROGRAMS****Medicaid (MA)**

The STFS families are FIP eligible so they may also be eligible for LIF. Unless the family rejects the LIF coverage, process and approve MA as you would for any other family.

**State Emergency Relief (SER)**

The STFS lump sum is treated like any other income for SER budgeting purposes. When SER eligibility is determined after STFS has been issued, Bridges includes the STFS payment as income for the month received when determining if the client had good cause not to make the required payments. Bridges also includes the STFS payment as income when received during the SER period

**FAP, CDC**

The STFS payment is excluded as a non-recurring lump sum.

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**MONITORING  
CONCURRENT  
RECEIPT OF STFS  
AND FIP**

If FIP is authorized for any portion of the STFS period, Bridges will generate an Over Payment referral to the recoupment specialist. The over issuance is equal to the entire amount of the STFS payment and is treated as a client error in BAM 700, Benefit Over issuances.

**EFFECTIVE**

May 10, 2009

**2) CDC****BEM 706****CDC Payments****Client Reporting  
Responsibilities**

Every two weeks, clients receiving CDC subsidy benefits are required to:

- Complete the DHS-641, Child Development and Care Parent Record by entering the daily activity and child care hours each pay period for children in care. The record must be maintained by the client for four years.

**Note:** On April 30, 2009, an initial mailing of the DHS-641 and billing information and instructions was mailed to all clients who had a current authorization on the system as of April 16, 2009. The DHS-641 will be automatically mailed when an authorization has been approved. A sample and additional copies of the reporting record may be obtained online at [www.michigan.gov/childcare](http://www.michigan.gov/childcare) or ordered by completing the DHS-1434, Stockroom Requisition.

- Clients must report information on the DHS-641, by using the I-billing Internet system at [www.michigan.gov/childcare](http://www.michigan.gov/childcare) or the Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) telephone billing system by calling 1-888-779-2775 (touch-tone) or 1-888-826-1772 (voice activated).

- The 10 digit parent ID number, located on the DHS-198-C, Child Development and Care Client/Certificate Notice and the 6 digit personal identification number (PIN) are required for reporting. The client PIN is mailed once an authorization is entered on Bridges.
- If the number of hours billed by the provider do not match the number of hours reported by the client, the Central Reconciliation Unit will complete a review and make a determination.

### **PIN Replacement**

Clients who do not receive a PIN or who need a PIN replacement should call the Customer Service number at 1-800-444-5364. Requests for PIN replacements may also be faxed to Customer Service at 517-335-6054 or 517-335-6236. Faxed requests must include the client's name, address, phone number, parent ID number and must be signed by the client. PINS will not be given out over the telephone and will take approximately 7 to 10 days from the date of the request to be received.

### **Reporting Instructions and Informational Resources**

Available parent and provider resources are located at [www.michigan.gov/childcare](http://www.michigan.gov/childcare):

- Web-based training.
- I-Billing for Child Care, Step-By-Step Instructions for Parents.
- I-Billing for Child Care, Step-By-Step Instructions for Providers.
- I-Billing for Parents, Most Frequently Asked Questions.
- I-Billing for Providers, Most Frequently Asked Questions.
- Help is also available by calling the Central Reconciliation Unit at 1-866-990-3227.

Community Coordinated Child Care (4C) On-Site Coordinators are also an available parent resource.

Manual pages for CDC will be updated with the October release.

Manual pages for STFS will be updated with the July release.

**MANUAL  
MAINTENANCE  
INSTRUCTIONS**